

who has served and inspired our community over the years. One cannot begin to describe the esteem in which this beloved man is held in the local parish. It is only fitting that the House of Representatives recognize his dedicated and faithful service today.

THE NATURAL RESOURCE SUMMIT OF AMERICA

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few moments to talk about one of the silver linings in the cloud of apprehension and mistrust left behind by the 104th Congress in its handling of environmental issues. One of the very good things that came out of that Congress was the formation of the Natural Resource Summit of America. The NRSA is a coalition of now 37 organizations determined not to let natural resource policy in this country fall victim to the sort of extremism that was all too often evident in that 104th Congress.

The existence of one more environmental coalition isn't usually cause for notice. But the NRSA is different, because in this one collection of separate and independent groups, you see the first very impressive signs of the profound change occurring in the debate over natural resources. For the first time in a very long time, hunters, anglers, environmentalists, outdoor publications, outdoor business groups, natural resource scientists, and others have come together around a common set of principles.

One of the NRSA's leaders is Helen Sevier, the Chair and CEO of B.A.S.S., Inc., the parent company of the Bass Anglers Sportman Society. Joined by my distinguished colleague SHERWOOD BOEHLERT, I had the pleasure of meeting Helen and hearing her speak last summer at the NRSA's first grassroots meeting in Birmingham. When I listened to her describe the NRSA, it was clear that the groups were uniting not only around common environmental principles, but also around common sense and an end to partisanship and extreme language.

That day in Birmingham, she recalled being labeled as an "environmental extremist" for opposing the Clean Water Act reauthorization process in the House in the 104th Congress:

We said, "wait a minute, these guys really don't get it. They don't understand the way Americans really feel about their natural resources. They don't appreciate the 25 years of phenomenal progress that has been made improving our Nation's air and water quality. And they don't recognize the needs that still exist to restore ecosystems and fish and wildlife habitat." So we thought that if the environmental groups and the concerns they expressed on natural resource legislation were considered by Congress to be extreme, or not representative of the values of average Americans, then by merging the image of the hunting and fishing groups with the environmentalists we may be able to refocus congressional attention on the importance of natural resource values among their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, the attention of Congress is already being refocused by cooperative efforts

like that of the NRSA. On issues like protection of land and water habitats, clean water, wetlands, and forests, the vast outdoor community has shown its concern and its strength. The NRSA recently sent a letter to every Member of Congress stating the groups' priorities. They include maintaining the integrity of our public lands and waters and keeping them public, strengthening the Clean Water Act, and enhancing funding for the stewardship of public lands and natural resources.

These priorities are the result of more than a year of discussions between some very different people: a pair of scientists, one from the American Fisheries Society another from the National Wildlife Federation, a land protection specialist from the Sierra Club, a conservation expert from the B.A.S.S., an editor at *Sports Afield* magazine, a lawyer from the Environmental Defense Fund, just to name a few. These discussions produced a framework for action and a set of common sense shared goals.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to hear a lot from the NRSA in the coming months about natural resource policy. But I think we can learn more from than a set of positions on issues. We can learn that groups and individuals who share a vision of the future and are dedicated to the hard work of getting there, should refuse to let traditional partisanship, extreme rhetoric, or simple complacency stand in their way. It's a lesson the NRSA appears to have learned and an example for this Congress to follow.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD, COMMISSION FOR WOMEN: TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the Montgomery County, MD, Commission for Women as it celebrates 25 years of service to the women of the county. To mark the occasion, the commission will hold a gala dinner, and the proceeds from the event will be used to support a scholarship fund and services for displaced homemakers and disadvantaged women.

In 1972, I had the great privilege and honor to serve on the first Commission and later to be elected as its second president. I have watched with pride as it has grown into an important voice and resource for women throughout the Washington metropolitan area. The commission advises the county executive, the county council, county agencies, and the general public on issues of concern to county women and their families. But, most importantly, the commission is there on a daily basis to serve the immediate and long-term needs of women in Montgomery County.

The Commission for Women provides such direct services as personal and career counseling, career-readiness classes, programs for displaced homemakers, workshops on changing careers, family crisis and transition services for events like separation and divorce and job loss, and workshops on women's health, sexual harassment, dependent care, and time management skills.

This year, as part of its anniversary observance, the commission released a study on the

status of women in Montgomery County, an invaluable tool for both the general public and elected officials. Comprising 52 percent of the population, the women of Montgomery County play a critically important role in the county's social and economic health. The study calls for a "paradigm shift in the development of laws, policies, practices and procedures affecting education, employment, health, law enforcement and crime prevention" and underscores an "urgent need to reevaluate outdated policies of schools and of most employers * * * based on the assumption of a single wage earner and an at-home parent."

Montgomery County, MD, has grown and changed in the last 25 years from a quiet bedroom suburb of Washington, DC, into a thriving cosmopolitan community. Over the years, the Montgomery County Commission for Women has been an important force in meeting the challenge of that change and in helping women and their families adjust to and prosper in a dynamic and diverse society.

Mr. Speaker, please join with me in saluting the Montgomery County Commission for Women and its talented and dedicated staff for 25 years of extraordinary service to the people of my county.

DEATH OF AMBASSADOR OMER EISSA

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to former Ambassador Omer Eissa, who died in a tragic automobile accident while visiting Sudan on May 20. Ambassador Eissa served with great distinction as Sudan's Ambassador to Washington when Gaafar Mohamed Numeiry was President of Sudan. Ambassador Eissa was a great friend of the United States, and many Members of Congress had the great pleasure of knowing him. I will always be grateful to Ambassador Eissa for the hospitality that he extended to the Dance Theater of Harlem during several of their visits to Washington.

Ambassador Eissa had a long and diversified public service career in Sudan. As a member of the Sudanese Parliament, he was chairman of the Committee on Housing and Education. He was also a member of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Refugees. Subsequently, he was appointed as a member of President Numeiry's cabinet, which he later left to become Ambassador to the United States, serving concurrently as nonresident Ambassador to Canada and Mexico. While in Washington, Ambassador Eissa served as dean of the Council of Arab Ambassadors as well as dean of the Council of African Ambassadors.

After the coup that removed President Numeiry from office in 1985, Ambassador Eissa made his home near Washington and became an American citizen. I wish to extend my most heartfelt condolences to his wife and children, who can be very proud of what Ambassador Eissa has done for the people of Sudan.